

The Dessert

TO THE TRUE AMERICAN.

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VOL. I.

ZIMEO,

A TALE.

(Concluded from No. 16.)

They fought our friendship, and we loved them truly. They informed us one day, that they were now obliged to leave us, and to return to their country. The news affected the whole village, but no one more than Ellaroe. They told us with tears the day of their departure; and said they should leave us with less regret, if we would give them an opportunity to testify their regard, by entertaining us on board their ships. They pressed us to repair to them the next morning, with the young men, and the prettiest girls of the village. Accordingly conducted by Matomba and by some old people for the sake of decency, we set off for the ships.

"Onebo is but five miles from the sea, and we were on the shore an hour after sun-rise. We saw two vessels at a little distance from each other: they were covered with branches of trees, and the sails and the cordage were loaded with flowers. As soon as our friends perceived us, they founded their instruments, and welcomed us with songs. The Portuguese came to receive us; they divided our company, and an equal number went on board each ship. Two guns were fired; the concert ceased; we were loaded with irons; and the vessels set sail."

Here Zimeo stopt for a moment; then, resuming his story: "Yes, my friends, (said he) these men, to whom we had been prodigal of our wealth and of our confidence, carried us away, to sell us with the criminals they had purchased at

Benin. I felt at once the misery of Ellaroe, of Matomba, and myself. I loaded the Portuguese with reproaches and threats: I bit my chains, and wished I could die: but a look from Ellaroe, changed my purpose. The monsters had not separated me from her. Matomba was in the other vessel.

"Three of our young men, and a young girl, found means to deprive themselves of life. I exhorted Ellaroe to imitate their example; but the pleasure of loving and being beloved attached her to life. The Portuguese made her believe that they intended us for a lot as happy as we had formerly enjoyed. She hoped, at least, that we should not be separated, and that she might again find her father.

"After having, for some days, wept the loss of our liberty, the pleasure of being always together stopped the tears of Ellaroe, and abated my despair.

"In those moments when we were not interrupted by the presence of our inhuman master, Ellaroe would fold me in her arms, and exclaim: "O, my friend! let us endeavour to support and encourage one another, and we shall resist all they can do to us: assured of your love, what have I to complain of? and what happiness is it that you would purchase at the expense of that which we now enjoy?"

"These words infused into me extraordinary fortitude; and I had no fear but one—that of being separated from Ellaroe.

"We were more than a month at sea: there was little wind, and our course was slow; at last the winds failed as entirely, and it fell a dead calm. For some days the Portuguese gave us no more food than

was barely sufficient to preserve us alive.

"Two negroes, determined on death, refused every species of nourishment, and secretly conveyed to us the bread and the dates that were designed for them. I concealed them with care, that they might be employed in preserving the life of Ellaroe.

"The calm continued; the sea, without a wave, presented one vast immoveable surface, to which our vessel seemed attached. The air was as still as the sea. The sun and the stars in their silent course disturbed not the profound repose that reigned over the face of the deep. Our anxious eyes were continually directed to that uniform and unbounded expanse, terminated only by the heaven's arch, that seemed to inclose us as in a vast tomb. Sometimes we mistook the undulations of light for the motion of the waters; but that error was of short duration. Sometimes, as we walked on the deck, we took the resistance of the air for the agitation of a breeze; but no sooner had we suspended our steps, than the illusion vanished, and the image of famine recurring, presented itself to our minds with redoubled horror.

"Our tyrants soon reserved for themselves the provisions that remained, and gave orders that a part of the blacks should be sacrificed as food for the rest. It is impossible to say whether this order, so worthy of the men of your race, or the manner in which it was received, affected me most. I read, on every face, a greedy satisfaction, a dismal terror, a savage hope. I saw those unfortunate companions of my slavery observe one another with voracious attention, and the eyes of tigers.

"Two young girls, of the village of Onebo, who had suffered most by the famine, were the first victims. The cries of these unhappy wretches still resound in my ears; and I see the tears streaming from the eyes of their famished companions, as they devoured the horrid repast.

"The little provisions which I had concealed from the observation of our tyrants, supported Ellaroe and myself, so that we were sure of not being destined to the sacrifice. I still had dates, and we threw into the sea, without being observed, the horrid morsels that were offered to us.

"The calm continuing, despondency began to seize our tyrants; they became remiss in their attention towards us; they observed us slightly, and we were under little restraint. One evening when they retired, they left me on the deck with Ellaroe.—When she perceived we were alone, she threw her arms round me, and I pressed her with rapture in mine. Her eyes beamed with an unusual expression of sensibility and tenderness, I had never in her presence experienced such ardour, such emotion, such palpitation, as in that moment. Long we remained thus enfolded in one another's arms, unable to speak.

"O thou, (said I, at last) whom I had chosen to be my companion on a throne, thou shalt at least be my companion in death!"

"Ah, Zimeo! (said she) perhaps the great Orissa will preserve our lives and I shall be thy wife."

"Ellaroe, (I replied) had not these monsters by treachery prevailed, Damel would have chosen thee for my wife, as thy father had chosen me for thy husband. My beloved Ellaroe, do we still depend on the authority of Damel, and shall we now wait for orders which we can never receive? No, no; far from our parents, torn from our country, our obedience is now due only to our own hearts."

"O, Zimeo!" cried she, bedewing my face with her tears.

"Ellaroe, (said I) if you weep in a moment like this, you love not as I do."

"Ah! (replied she) observe, by the light of the moon, this unchangeable ocean; throw your eyes on these immovable sails; behold on the deck, the traces of the blood of my two friends; consider the little that remains of our dates; then, O Zimeo, be but my husband! be but my husband, and I shall be contented."

"So saying, she redoubled her caresses. We swore, in presence of the great Orissa, to be united, whatever should be our destiny; and we gave ourselves up to numberless pleasures, which we had never before experienced. In the enjoyment of these we forgot our slavery; the thoughts of impending death, the loss of empire, the hope of vengeance, all were forgotten, and we were sensible to nothing but the blandishments of love. At last, however, the sweet delirium ceased; we found ourselves deserted by every flattering illusion, and left in our former state; truth appeared in proportion as our senses regained their tranquillity; our souls began to suffer unusual oppression; weighed down on every side, the calm experienced was awful and dead, like the stillness of nature around us.

"I was roused from this despondency by a cry from Ellaroe: her eyes sparkled with joy: she made me observe the sails and cordage agitated by the wind; we felt the motion of the waves; a fresh breeze sprung up, that carried the two vessels in three days to Porto Bello.

"There we met Matomba; he bathed me with his tears; he embraced his daughter, and approved of our marriage. Would you believe it, my friends? the pleasure of rejoining Matomba,—the pleasure of being the husband of Ellaroe,—the charms of her love, the joy of seeing her safe from such cruel distress, suspend-

ed in me all feelings of our misfortunes: I was ready to fall in love with bondage; Ellaroe was happy, and her father seemed reconciled to his fate. Yes, perhaps I might have pardoned the monsters that had betrayed us; but Ellaroe and the father were sold to an inhabitant of Porto Bello, and I to a man of your nation, who carried slaves to the Antilles.

"It was then that I felt the extent of my misery; it was then that my natural disposition was changed; it was then I imbibed that passion for revenge, that thirst of blood, at which I myself shudder, when I think of Ellaroe, whose image alone is able to still my rage.

"When our fate was determined, my wife and her father threw themselves at the feet of the barbarians that separated us; even I prostrated myself before them. Ineffectual abasement! they did not even deign to listen to us. As they were preparing to drag me away, my wife, with wildness in her eyes, with out-stretched arms, and shrieks that still rend my heart, rushed impetuously to embrace me. I disengaged myself from those who held me. I received Ellaroe in my arms: she enfolded me in hers; and instinctively, by a sort of mechanical impulse, we clasped our hands together, and formed a chain round each other. Many cruel hands were employed, with vain efforts to tear us asunder. I felt that these efforts would however, soon prove effectual; I was determined to rid myself of life; but how leave in this dreadful world my dear Ellaroe?—I was about to lose her for ever; I had every thing to dread; I had nothing to hope; my imaginations were desperate; the tears ran in streams over my face; I uttered only frantic exclamations or groans of despair, like the roarings of a lion exhausted in equal combat. My hands gradually loosed from the body of Ellaroe, and began to approach her neck. Merciful Orissa! the whites extricated my wife from my furious embrace. She gave a loud shriek of despair, as we were separa-

ted. I saw her carry her hands towards her neck to accomplish my fatal design. She was prevented: she took her last look of me. Her eyes, her whole countenance, her attitude, the inarticulate accents that escaped her, all bespoke the extremities of grief and of love.

"I was dragged on board the vessel of your nation; I was pinioned, and placed in such a manner as to make any attempt on my life impossible; but they could not force me to take any sustenance. My new tyrants at first employed threats; at last they made me suffer torments which whites alone can invent: but I resisted all.

"A negro, born at Benin, who had been a slave for two years with my new master, had compassion on me. He told me we were going to Jamaica, where I might easily recover my liberty. He talked to me of the wild negroes, and the commonwealth they had formed in the centre of the island. He told me that these negroes sometimes went on board English ships, to make depredations on the Spanish, and hinted that in one of those cruises Ellaroe and her father might be rescued. He awakened in my heart the ideas of vengeance, and the hopes of love. I consented to live: you now see for what. I am already revenged; but I am not satisfied till I regain the idols of my heart. If that cannot be I renounce the light of the sun. My friends take all my riches, and provide me a vessel!"

Here Zimeo was interrupted by the arrival of Francisco, supported by the young negro who had so suddenly retired upon the sight of his prince. No sooner had Zimeo perceived them than he flew to Francisco.

"O, my father! O, Matomba! (cried he) do I indeed see you again? O Ellaroe!"

She lives! (said Matomba) she lives!—she weeps your misfortunes!—she belongs to this family!"

"Lead me! lead me!"

"See, (interrupted Matomba, showing him Wilmot's friend) there is the man who saved us."

Zimeo embraced by turns, now Matomba, now Wilmot, and now his friend; then, with wild eagerness, "Lead me (he cried) to my love."

Marianne, or rather Ellaroe, was approaching: the same negro who had met Matomba had gone in quest of her. She came trembling, lifting her hands and eyes to heaven: and with tears in her eyes: in a faint voice, she could hardly utter, "Zimeo, Zimeo!"

She had put her child into the arms of

the negro, and after the first transports and embraces were over, she presented the infant to her husband.

"Zimeo, behold thy son!—for him alone have Matomba and I supported life."

Zimeo took the child, and kissed him a thousand and a thousand times.

"He shall not be a slave (cried he); the son of my Ellaroe shall not be a slave to the whites."

"But for him (said she)—but for him, I should have quitted this world, in which I could not find the man which my soul loved."

The most tender discourses at last gave way to the sweetest caresses which were only suspended to bestow those caresses on their child. But soon their gratitude to Wilmot and his friend engrossed them wholly: and surely, never did man, not even a negro, express his amiable sentiment so nobly and so well.

Zimeo being informed that the English troops were on their march, made his retreat in good order.—Ellaroe and Matomba melted into tears on quitting Wilmot. They would willingly have remained his slaves; and conjured him to follow them to the mountain. He promised to visit them there, as soon as peace should be concluded between the wild negroes and the colony.—He kept his word: and went thither often, to contemplate the virtues, the love, and the friendship, of Zimeo, of Matomba, and of Ellaroe.

RETRIBUTION;

A TALE.

IN the latter end of September, a night storm had ravaged the country which surrounded Moreland manor.

Sir Robert Moreland, whose tenants were considered as a part of his family, learned, on a survey taken on the following day, that his own grounds had sustained the most material injury.

In the mind and bosom of this great and good man, the sentiments of the poet were admitted in their full force.

"Princes and kings may flourish or may fade;
"A breath can make them as a breath has made;
"But a bold peasantry, our country's pride,
"Once fall'n their lots can never be supplied."

Than Sir Robert, no one beheld with a keener pang, the effects of innovations, permitted by a British senate, and made from time to time on indulgencies long held by the industrious poor, and which had been granted by the truly munificent

in better days to their more happy forefathers.

Many a venerable oak, whose spreading branches had for ages sheltered the traveller from the rains of heaven, were levelled by the tempest, and lay uprooted on the ground; their foliage no more to flutter the gentle breeze; their branches no more to wave to the spring and autumnal winds.

Although at every turn were presented vestiges of the destroying power, the reviving calm with which the late convulsion of nature was succeeded, rendered the wood and verdure, still luxuriant, doubly captivating. Imagination pictured the change a few weeks would produce! the scene was soon to fade! a consideration which increased the present splendour of its departing beauties.

Allured by the fineness of the evening, Sir Robert and his daughter had rambled to the extremity of that part of the extensive pleasure grounds which skirted Moreland wood; from whence, to their astonishment and terror, issued the faint screams of an infant. Sir Robert repaired to the gate which opened to its gloomy confines.

He had not proceeded far before he discovered the extended form of a female mendicant, and a beautiful boy weeping near it. The little urchin, on seeing the baronet, ran towards him, and was folded in the embrace of that genuine philanthropist.

The breathless object had received a blow on the forehead, which appeared to have been the only, and assuredly was the decisive one. The body was yet warm, and one of the servants employed in the garden, and who had been led to the spot on hearing the cry of distress, conveyed it to the house; where every means of restoration recommended by the faculty, in cases like the present, were applied to, but without effect.

Sophia Moreland undertook the care of the infant, and a large reward, but without effect, was offered for the apprehension of the murderer.

The child received the name of Edward Moreland at the parish church, and soon became the darling of the family, while the domestics were charged to consider him as the son of his patron.

In educating the little Edward no expence was withheld; Sir Robert, who lived till the youth had attained his eighteenth year, sufficiently provided for him in his will, and, at his death, Edward was left in the most desirable of all earthly states, namely, that of independence.

At the time she lost her father, Louisa Moreland had long exchanged her name for that of Davenport, and for thirteen years had been a wife tenderly beloved, and a mother completely blessed. Edward Moreland was on his return from his travels when he heard of the decease of his revered friend. In the city of Paris, at that time the seat of public rejoicing on the recent marriage of the sixteenth Louis with the imprudent and unfortunate Maria, Edward was a sharer in the common joy, which varied amusements occasioned among a polished and brilliant people. His accomplishments and address passed not unnoticed at court, and the smiles of the lovely queen were not unfrequently turned on the handsome and polished young Englishman.

In the midst of these delights, letters from England announced to Edward the melancholy event before alluded to. The loss of Sir Robert overwhelmed all his joy. In his fond imagination, and in his grateful mind, he had been anticipating the moment rapidly approaching, when he should run into the more than paternal embrace of his guardian and his friend.

He had just returned from a ball given at the palace of a prince of the blood, which he has since dishonoured, and, who has since, also, signally atoned for crimes, from the mention of which a shuddering nation recoils; when a plan of pleasure was laid out by the party he had been with, for the following day.

Respect and gratitude forbade him longer to remain amidst a round of unmeaning dissipation, and his determination was scarcely fixed on an immediate departure for England, when he received the letter which informed him, the object which had occasioned his worthy resolve, was removed beyond the knowledge of his duty and attachment.

Silent and comfortless passed the hours till he arrived at the town residence of the honourable Mr. Davenport.

Edward had no cause to complain of his reception, it was worthy of the Louisa who had adored him as a child, and who now considered him in the light his appearance, manners, and conduct demanded.

In the family of the Davenports our hero remained for a few happy years. That family consisted of Mr. Davenport, his lady, and a daughter, whose youth, beauty, and mental endowments, rivetted chains for the affections of the too susceptible and ill-starred Edward—but fate had not yet wound up his transient career of happiness,—still it existed in the rich deli-

rium raised by love for love from the virtuous, artless, and interesting Sophia.

Since the death of her father, Mrs. Davenport had been subject to a frequent lowness of spirits, which at length terminated in a settled melancholy; and in this distressing situation Louisa took an eternal leave of a world she had long ceased to enjoy.

Mrs. Davenport had been dead several months, when the widower proposed to Edward a journey to one of his seats in Lincolnshire, and which was the place of his nativity.

Sophia received the intelligence of the family's departure from London to scenes of rural quiet and repose with a satisfaction which was heartfelt, for Edward loved the country.

Nor was Edward less pleased when he considered in how much greater a degree he should enjoy the society of the most amiable and most beloved of women.

Davenport Park was a paradise within itself, and Edward and Sophia were the happy wanderers amongst its sequestered shades. Innocence reigned in each gentle heart, and they remained unconscious of the fiend who was scowling with a malignant eye on their chaste endearments, to destroy, in his own dark hour, their happiness for ever.

Lord Belford was in possession of a fortune which blessed not its owner. His first lady, forced by avarice, in the person of a father, into the arms of age and deformity; by infidelity punished the one, and broke the heart of the other. It was no less true, and no less just, that she brought on her own ruin, and died in the flower of her days, cut short by infamy, and imbrued by crimes.

This worthless peer was the fatan which worked the fall of as pure a pair as ever breathed the effusions of mutual affection before approving heaven. Sophia was an object of attraction—the face of loveliness, the form of symmetry and grace, passed not long unnoticed by the detestable Belford. Nor could Mr. Davenport withstand listening to the magnificent offers held forth, should Sophia consent to become Lady Belford.

Sophia too listened with becoming respect to her father, but gave a firm and solemn refusal; which being conveyed to Belford, the tottering dotard, with all the little pride of titled meanness, exclaimed, "It is well, Davenport! it is very well! The beggar's brat is preferred, and I am properly served for my condescending as I have done." With proper dignity, Davenport resented the contumely of his lordly neighbour, but at the same time did

not fail to question Sophia concerning the situation of her heart towards the obscure foundling. Above disguise, Sophia confessed her sentiments, and the consequence was the instant dismissal of Edward from the mansion of Davenport.

To render the banishment of Edward still more painful, Mr. Sydney, his late tutor, was summoned to the study; where he received, from the hand of Sophia's incensed parent, a letter, which he was instructed to deliver to Edward on that young gentleman's return from the next town, where he had been to bestow on a suffering family the donation of real benevolence, namely, a *private* one.

Mr. Sydney was a member of the church:—from youth to age he had preserved a conduct which left his conscience clear of any wilful neglect of the duties of his pastoral office, and well it might be said of this worthy and venerable teacher, that

"He meekly bore the ensigns of his God."

From a commission so repulsive to his feelings, Mr. Sydney would willingly have been excused; but the will of his employer was not to be contended with; he could only submit to the task imposed, and lament the evil he could not remedy.

Greatly depressed, Sydney went forth, and met his pupil in the small wilderness that divided the park from the garden. Hearts sinking beneath a weight of anguish had been cheered, and at that moment the orphan and the widow were remembering Edward in their prisons previous to their pressing the pillow of returning peace.

"Is Mr. Sydney ill?" exclaimed Edward, on observing the look of sorrow and dismay which alarmed him.

"Behold me, Sir," rejoined Mr. Sydney, "oppressed with a weight of sorrow which you only can lighten. Your dearest friend is gone to that peace which dwells not in this world. The loss to both of us is irreparable; but on your fortitude it depends, called forth as you are to struggle with many troubles, to bestow comfort or anguish on the remnant of my existence. My departed patron placed you under my care with a charge the most solemn! a charge which I pledged my honour to fulfil. It was, that I should be to you as a father, and I trust, generous and noble young man, as I have always found you, you will not suffer me to renounce the endearing title.

Edward pressed the hand of his greatly revered teacher and with an emphatic "*never!*" placed it to his heart. Mr. Sydney gave the letter in silence, and retired to the garden. Its contents were:

(To be concluded in No. 18.)